

institution. The word is now out that it is not RAY LAHOOD who is presiding so ably over this great institution, it is Muftiah McCartin who is, in fact, making that happen.

When it comes to appreciation, the gentleman is absolutely right, Mr. Speaker, we do not express enough appreciation to our staff.

Muftiah, I will say to you, you saw what RAY LAHOOD did to ensure that he was adequately appreciated. He went from serving as a staff member to becoming a Member of Congress. I don't want to necessarily recommend that to you as you head into retirement, but if you do want to follow the LaHood model, it is certainly something you might consider.

Let me say again, congratulations to Muftiah for her phenomenal service. I know on behalf of Speaker HASTERT, the House leadership, and all the Members of this institution on both sides of the aisle, we are very, very honored to have had you serve here so ably.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the many years of service of House parliamentarian, Muftiah McCartin, who completes her excellent work in this body later this week.

Ms. McCartin joined the Parliamentarian's office in 1976, and has served during the tenure of six Speakers of the House, and six Presidents.

In 1991, she became the first woman to be appointed a Parliamentarian. As someone who understands the importance of breaking glass ceilings, I am particularly honored to acknowledge her outstanding work.

Muftiah has always had a wonderful smile and a warm demeanor on the House floor. As we know, it can get pretty heated in debate and very partisan.

But Muftiah has always been a calm and rational presence to Members of both sides of the aisle and their staff who seek parliamentary advice. She has brought a keen mind, and a clear understanding of House rules that has served this institution very well.

In addition to the long, grueling hours that she has spent on the House floor, Muftiah McCartin has managed to raise four wonderful children: Marissa, Elaine, Sandra, and Luke. I'm sure she will welcome spending the extra time with her family and her husband, Terry.

Muftiah, today we thank you for your service to this great institution and wish you the very best. You have been a tremendous asset to the work that we do every day. And we will miss you.

Thank you again for your many years of commitment toward making this House of Representatives a better place.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor House Associate Parliamentarian Muftiah McCartin. Today marks the final day in the long and distinguished career of Muftiah, who has served this House with great distinction for nearly 30 years in the Office of the Parliamentarian.

During her nearly three decades of service, Muftiah served under six Speakers and three different Parliamentarians of the House. Charlie Johnson, the former Parliamentarian, would often describe Muftiah as a "Renaissance

woman." She came to work for the Parliamentarian's Office as a clerk in 1976 and continued her education at night. On top of her day job and night school, Muftiah was a dedicated mother. She accomplished all her tasks with great determination, strength, and grace. After completing her juris doctorate, Muftiah was the first woman appointed an Assistant Parliamentarian in January of 1991 by Speaker Tom Foley.

Aside from her dedication to the office's daily procedural mission, she has provided special expertise to the House in the areas of budget process and rule making. Muftiah has also assisted the office as the long-time editor of the House Rules and Manual, published every Congress, as well as two editions of House Practice.

Over the years I have served in this House as both a Member and now Speaker, I have come to have a greater appreciation for the role of the office of the Parliamentarian and those giving me advice. On behalf of all those who have looked to you for help while presiding in the Speaker's chair, thank you for being such a trusted and educated colleague.

I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors and hope that with the long hours of this job behind you, you will be afforded more time to spend with your husband and four children.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to an outstanding member of the House Parliamentarian's office who is retiring today after nearly 30 years of service. Muftiah McCartin will be retiring from her position as Associate Parliamentarian. She will truly be missed.

Muftiah has been a part of this institution longer than most Members. She began her career with the Parliamentarian's office in 1976, 3 years before I came to the House. She started as a Clerk and worked her way up to one of the senior positions in the office. As a Clerk, she continued her education and eventually earned her law degree. She became the first woman to be appointed a Parliamentarian in 1991. Her story is truly one of personal and professional excellence, initiative, and dedication to her responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Appropriations is particularly sad to see Muftiah leave. Her knowledge of parliamentary rules and precedents as they pertain to appropriations bills is unsurpassed, as is her knowledge of the budget process. The Committee has always had tremendous confidence in her skills and ability to proffer accurate advice. With numerous regular and supplemental appropriations bills coming to the House floor each year, the Committee relied on her expertise extensively. The words "check with Muftiah" were heard over and over again in the Committee's offices.

The Committee's high admiration of Muftiah's professional skills is matched by the Committee's appreciation of the calm and composed manner in which she performed her duties. She is always approachable and willing to take time to work on any matter, even when the other demands on her time are huge. She always approaches her work with a smile and keeps her sense of humor. In addition to the professional relationships she developed with the staff of the Committee, many highly valued

personal friendships arose during her time with us.

Muftiah will now be able to spend more time with her family—her husband Terry, and her children Marissa, Elaine, Sandra, and Luke. She and her family have made a lot of sacrifices over the years. I hope that now she will have more time to attend her children's basketball, soccer, and baseball games as well as other family activities that are so important.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Members and staff of the Committee on Appropriations, I want to wish Muftiah well as she embarks on this next phase of her life's journey. I also genuinely thank her for all that she has done for the House and for the Committee, and I want her to know that she will be missed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the 1-minute speech I just offered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

#### SAYING FAREWELL TO MUFTIAH MCCARTIN

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the many years of service of House Parliamentarian Muftiah McCartin, who completes her excellent work in this body later this week. Ms. McCartin joined the Parliamentarian's Office in 1976, and has served during the tenure of six Speakers and six Presidents. In 1991, she became the first woman to be appointed a Parliamentarian.

The minority leader, Ms. PELOSI, is someone who understands the importance of breaking glass ceilings. She had hoped to be here personally to congratulate Muftiah on her outstanding work and her dedication over the many years.

She goes on to say Muftiah always had such a wonderful smile and warm demeanor on the House floor, which I might comment often lacks smiles and warm demeanors. Well, it is warm; sometimes heated. As we know, it can get heated in debate and very partisan, but she has always been a calm and rational presence to Members on both sides of the aisle and their staff who seek parliamentary advice. She brought a keen mind and a clear understanding of House rules that have served this institution very well.

In addition to the long, grueling hours she has spent on the House floor, she has managed to raise four wonderful children: Marissa, Elaine, Sandra, and Luke, one of whom has the great, good sense to have moved to my congressional district. That is my district,

not Ms. PELOSI's. I am sure she will welcome spending the extra time with her family and her husband, Terry.

Muftiah, today we thank you for your service to this great institution and wish you the very best. You have been a tremendous asset to the work we do every day, and we will miss you. Thank you again for your many years of commitment toward making the House of Representatives a better place.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I find it a great irony and some goodness that I can get some time from my friend.

I was sitting in my office and I did not know, frankly, that Muftiah was old enough to retire, take on another job, or leave the nest here, or whatever she is doing, but as somebody who has personally benefited from her expertise and wisdom, as I have had the honor to sit in the Chair, I can say we could not have laymen go up there and hold the gavel without somebody like Muftiah at our right arm telling us sometimes what to say and what not to say. I am sure she never would sit down when I had the gavel because she was nervous something would go awry.

The other thing that is important, when school kids and visitors come to the House Chamber, I often point to the picture of George Washington and the fact that you can still see the sword painted out of his hand. I explain to school kids the reason the sword was painted out of his hand in his portrait in the House Chamber is that we philosophically believe that our debate here, our spirited debate, sometimes our acrimonious debate, sometimes our bitter debate, is still better than the alternative, and that alternative is civil war or civil disruption, as we see around the world.

□ 1845

I believe that all of our Parliamentarians aid that in that sometimes we get out of line, Democrats or Republicans, in the spirit of the moment, in the emotion of the moment, and we say something that we regret saying; and it is at that time when all eyes turn to a nonpartisan, objective third party who can say everybody sit down, a little calmness here, let us get through this maze of parliamentary mystery and then get back on the course of civil discussion.

I want to say, Muftiah, thank you for being part of that team and thank you for everything that you are doing. Your job is a profound one, and it is one that should be studied in every civics class in every school at every level of education in America.

And I want to say to my friend from the west coast who does not always

vote green when I vote red and vice versa, we always agree that this is the place where we can come and have good, open debate thanks to people like Muftiah and the Parliamentarians.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, that is correct. I only regret that she trained him too well.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### HONORING THE 100TH TEXAN: MARINE STAFF SERGEANT RUSSELL SLAY

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that "never in the history of the world has any soldier sacrificed more for the freedom and liberty of total strangers than the American soldier," said by Zell Miller about the American fighting men.

I rise today to honor a young American marine from my southeast Texas district, Marine Staff Sergeant Russell Slay, who valiantly served the Nation in Iraq and who died doing so. He was a member of the 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion of the 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Russell Slay grew up in my hometown of Humble, Texas. As a student at Humble High School, he played football and was in the band. After he graduated from Humble High School, he started working, but quickly realized that he needed something more in his life. His high school friend Jason Tucker had joined the Marine Corps, and he had made the decision to join him and fight for his country. His father, Roy, a retired Houston police officer and a long-time friend of mine, said of his son, "Russell wanted to be somewhere that would teach and inspire him."

During his 10-year military career, he was trained to drive armored vehicles that carried combat troops from ships to beachheads during amphibious attacks. During his first tour of Iraq in 2002, Slay took part in overtaking Baghdad. He had been in charge of a section of four armored all-terrain vehicles. He left for his second mission on September 11, 2004.

Upon receiving his orders to report for a second tour in Iraq, Staff Ser-

geant Slay told his family and friends that he did not think he would make it back. A year ago today, Russell Slay's perceptive premonition became a reality. He was the 100th Texas member of the Armed Forces to be killed in Iraq. And, by the way, Mr. Speaker, one out of every 10 Americans wearing the uniform today is from the State of Texas. Russell Slay was 28 years old. He died in combat with seven others in Fallujah when his armored vehicle was attacked by terrorists.

His funeral was a moving memorial to him as a devoted father, son, and friend. More than 450 people paid their respects to a man that was remembered for his engaging spirit and his love of life. Family and friends expressed that Slay was nothing short of spectacular. His sense of humor was contagious. He was a loving, loyal, and dedicated father.

He left behind a 9-year-old daughter, Kinlee, and a 5-year-old son, Walker. At the funeral, Marine Captain Mike Evans read letters that Slay had prepared for his children in anticipation of his death. He told his daughter, Kinlee: "I love you and never knew what life was before you were born. You will always be Daddy's little girl." He encouraged her to have the best life possible and to be sure that she went to college. He said: "Daddy will always be with you and watching out for you. Hugs and kisses. I'll miss you."

He also wrote to his son, Walker, and told him that watching him grow up was "like reliving his own youth. He said: "You're the best little man there ever was. Be a studious son and stay in school. Always be a man. If you make mistakes, stand up and say so." Russell Slay encouraged his son to have children of his own so he too could feel the joy and happiness that had been brought to him.

He insisted in his letter that his family know how much he loved them, and he wrote: "I promise you my family was my last thought. Don't mourn for me, but celebrate my life."

Nine-year-old daughter Kinlee spoke at her father's funeral, and through tears she talked about playing cars with her dad and brother and shopping at Wal-Mart. She spoke fondly about the weekend family ritual of washing the car.

Charlie Flannigan, who officiated the funeral service, told of Slay's skills in the band that he and his buddies had created in Iraq. They called it the Texas Trio. He said Russell was not the best athlete, but he sure knew how to play a guitar.

Staff Sergeant Russell Slay in 28 short years had already exhibited a lifetime of bravery and boldness. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson once said: "From time to time the tree of liberty must be watered with the blood of tyrants and patriots." Russell Slay was a true American patriot. Russell Slay